



Superior Court of California County of Riverside

4050 Main Street, Riverside, CA 92501

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Contact: Mark A. Cope, Presiding Judge

(951) 777-3163

(Electronic version available at:

<http://riverside.courts.ca.gov/media/media.shtml>)

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT TO UNVEIL HISTORICAL PORTRAIT

RIVERSIDE COUNTY: The Riverside County Superior Court is pleased to announce that it will unveil a portrait of Judge George Robert Freeman at the Historic Courthouse in Riverside on September 13, 2013.

The portrait of Judge Freeman, a prominent member of the community whose tenure on the Riverside bench spanned from 1921 through 1946, is historically significant because he presided at the trial of Gordon Stewart Northcott, convicted of three murders in 1929. Because evidence from the victims was buried near a chicken house at the Northcott ranch near Wineville, in Riverside County, the crimes were referred to as the "Wineville Chicken Coop Murders."

The case received national attention. Wineville changed its name to Mira Loma on November 1, 1930, due in large part to the negative publicity surrounding the murders. The cities of Eastvale and Jurupa Valley, California took parts of the area of Mira Loma upon their incorporation in 2010 and 2011, respectively.

The portrait will be placed in Department One of the Historic Courthouse, the same courtroom at which Judge Freeman presided over the 27-day trial that ended with a jury convicting Northcott. On February 13, 1929, Freeman sentenced Northcott to death and he was executed at San Quentin State Prison on October 2, 1930.

Judge Freeman's family has graciously paid for repairs and refurbishments to bring the portrait back to its original state.

The unveiling will be held at 4:00 p.m. on September 13. The Historic Courthouse is located at 4050 Main Street, Riverside, 92501. Members of the media are invited to attend.

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